

# City of Clifton



## 2008 MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION REPORT

Adopted by the City of Clifton Planning Board on 3-27-08

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**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Clifton Planning Board has prepared this Reexamination Report to be presented to the City Council and the residents of Clifton to fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law which contains the enabling legislation governing planning and zoning in New Jersey municipalities. The law provides for the periodic reexamination of a municipality's master plan and development regulations at least every six years pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40-55D-89.

This report constitutes the Reexamination Report of the Planning Board's on-going review and reexamination of the City's land use designations and regulations. The law requires that each municipality's Planning Board prepare a report covering the following five elements:

- ☐ The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adopting of the last reexamination report.
- ☐ The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- ☐ The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last reviewed with particular regard to density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- ☐ The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.
- ☐ The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans pursuant to the "*Local Redevelopment and Housing Law*," P.L. 1992, C. 79(C.40A: 12A- 1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

## **RE-EXAMINATION REPORT**

The Reexamination Report requirements are addressed, as follows:

### **The Major Problems and Objectives relating to Land Development in the City at the Time of the Adoption of the last Reexamination Report.**

Consistent with the Planning Board's dedicated and on-going commitment to providing the City with comprehensive planning, the last City Master Plan Reexamination Report was prepared and adopted by the Clifton City Planning Board in 2003, with a prior Reexamination Report adopted in 2000. The 2003 Land Use Plan Element recognized the following specific goals and objectives:

Municipal Land Use Law goals and policies were incorporated into the Land Use Plan Element as follows:

1. To encourage City actions to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in Clifton which will promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare.
2. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters.
3. To provide adequate light, air and open space.
4. To ensure that the development within the City does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, Passaic County and the state as a whole.
5. To promote the establishment of appropriate densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment.
6. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies.
7. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of uses and open space, both public and private, in a manner compatible with the character of the City and the environment.
8. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging the location of such facilities and routes which would result in congestion, blight or unsafe conditions.
9. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangements.
10. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources, and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land.
11. To encourage planned unit developments which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development of the particular site.

12. To encourage senior citizen housing construction.
13. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land;
14. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to compliment municipal recycling programs.

**Goal 1:** To continue to encourage a balance of land uses with diversified residential areas, commercial areas to serve the residents of Clifton and nearby communities, and office and industrial areas to provide jobs and strengthen tax base.

**Policy Statement 1:** The City of Clifton recognizes that one of its most significant attributes is a balanced distribution of land uses. The Plan's land use recommendations are designed to protect and reinforce the prevailing residential development patterns in the community, and preclude any introduction of incompatible non-residential use in these neighborhoods or expansion of existing nonconforming uses. The recommendations are also designed to encourage commercial and industrial uses in established commercial areas through appropriate land use controls, and provide for infill development compatible to the uses and intensities to the levels, and locations of the established neighborhood.

**Goal 2:** To promote the continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the City's housing stock.

**Policy Statement 2:** The City recognizes the aging character and resultant deteriorating condition of a small portion of its housing stock. The City actively encourages the revitalization of its housing through the continue implementation of CDBG funds to upgrade and improve the housing stock available to low- and moderate-income City residents; through the residents' participation in available rehabilitation programs such as the City Home Improvement Program (CHIP); and through the implementation of a systematic code enforcement program to preserve the older residential neighborhoods. In addition, the city should review and upgrade the current property maintenance regulations, where appropriate, to ensure they contain regulations that will result in the preservation of the existing housing stock. In addition, the City recognizes that deteriorating housing exists in older neighborhoods, particularly Botany Village, and that redevelopment of these neighborhoods may be warranted.

**Goal 3:** To affirmatively address the community's low and moderate income housing obligation in the manner established by the City of Clifton Housing Plan.

**Policy Statement 3:** The New Jersey Council On Affordable Housing has established pre-credited housing need numbers for every municipality in the State. The City of Clifton has adopted a housing plan that addresses its housing needs, as adjusted by the COAH vacant land adjustment methodology. Consequently, the city land use policy is designed to complement the housing plan's recommendations and incorporate the sites designated in that plan.

**Goal 4:** To protect environmentally sensitive areas from development in excess of the carrying capacity of the land through steep slope ordinances or other restrictive ordinances as

necessary. Purchase of environmentally sensitive lands and development for access and use as park and open space should be considered. Retain all remaining farms as open space.

**Policy Statement 4:** The City of Clifton seeks to limit development to that which is sensitive to the community's particular physical characteristics, and preserves the city's sensitive environmental features. In particular, the City seeks to limit development to that which preserves steeply sloped areas (defined to include any slope of minimally fifteen percent grade), discourage development in order to preserve and protect the natural features in the city and requires increase horizontal setbacks between adjacent property uses on steeper slopes. Such areas would include the Garrett Mountain area from the border with Paterson to the border with Montclair, existing wetland areas city-wide and the preservation of remaining farms as open space.

**Goal 5:** To promote scenic preservation for the Garrett Mountain area by restricting development from breaking the ridgeline, or otherwise degrading the scenic qualities of this natural resource.

**Policy Statement 5:** The City of Clifton acknowledges that Garret Mountain represents a significant environmental area and one of the community's most significant attributes. To that extent, the city seeks to retain the area's environmental integrity and open space character, and ensure that any prospective development and/or redevelopment in the vicinity of Garret Mountain is responsive to its environmental sensitive features and can be accommodated within the community's. The city expressly seeks to discourage any additional development which adversely affects this natural resource and does not minimize any prospective intrusive aspects on the community's environmentally sensitive features. Strict enforcement of the steep slopes overlay provisions contained in the Clifton Zoning Ordinance is recommended.

**Goal 6:** To encourage the re-use, rehabilitation or reconstruction of older non-residential areas and existing commercial and industrial structures which have been vacated for potential re-use as appropriate non-residential uses in order to maintain a balance of land uses, existing jobs and to produce new jobs. Environmentally safe uses should be encouraged in such re-use, rehabilitation or reconstruction should be accomplished

**Policy Statement 6:** The City seeks to address the continuing loss of the manufacturing base by encouraging the adaptive reuse of older, obsolete industrial facilities. It is the policy of the city to promote the re-use of these facilities as non-residential uses in order to maintain the vitality of the employment base in the City and a balanced land use distribution; provide a comprehensive and coordinated plan to guide the redevelopment and necessary physical improvements; and plan for the redevelopment of vacant commercial and industrial structures as well as industrial complexes that are available to public and private redevelopment efforts. The city should actively promote the continued revitalization of existing commercial areas, identify potential parcels for redevelopment, and seek State and County funds earmarked for commercial revitalization.

**Goal 7:** To encourage the revitalization of the City's older business areas through proper land use controls; utilization of design elements; encourage provision and expansion of off-street parking; and provision of other public improvements.

**Policy Statement 7:** The City seeks to encourage the continued development of the community's business districts for retail and service commercial uses serving the daily needs of the residents. The City's policy is to define the commercial areas' functional role in the community and reaffirm their identity, uniformity of purpose, and integration of building, landscaping, signage, design and parking elements. Design criteria illumination, for signage, should include no back lighting.

**Goal 8:** To promote the revitalization and enhancement of the Main Avenue corridor as a unified, pedestrian-friendly downtown business district for the community.

**Policy Statement 8:** The City recognizes the corridor as the critical central business district in the community and seeks to revitalize and redevelop this area through the appropriate redevelopment mechanisms that are available to public and private redevelopment interests. The plan hereby incorporates any recommendation, policy, goal, design standards and bulk regulatory controls set forth by the Main Avenue Redevelopment Plan for "Section A" and "Section B". The City policy is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated long-range plan to guide the growth, development and physical improvements which are necessary to ensure the continued vitality of this area, including specialized area and bulk regulatory controls, signage and lighting provisions, parking and landscape features.

**Goal 9:** To provide adequate community facilities to serve Clifton's residents in terms of schools, parks and playgrounds, libraries, senior citizens centers, fire houses and other municipal buildings. A principal goal of this plan is to provide and preserve the community services for Clifton's residents, businesses and industry in terms of police and fire protection, adequate sanitary and storm sewers, street cleaning, snow removal, garbage disposal, health services, recreational programs, day care centers and senior citizen services.

**Policy Statement 9:** The city seeks to provide the minimum level of infrastructure improvements to accommodate local needs, and discourage the imposition of new or expanded facilities that may be utilized to encourage or support higher levels of development than contemplated in this plan. A principal goal of this plan is to encourage infrastructure improvements that would enhance the city's community facilities and services provided without resulting in increased pressures for more development in the community. The city's land use policy is expressly designed to discourage infrastructure improvements that would result in increased development pressures on the City's environmental features and, specifically, in the Garrett Mountain area.

**Goal 10:** To provide for the maintenance and upgrading of the local street system to serve abutting areas.

**Policy Statement 10:** The city recognizes that a safe and efficient traffic circulation system through the community enhance pedestrian safety, and provide associated improved traffic signage and signalization, as necessary. It is the objective of the municipality to render traffic improvements along major roads that also incorporate associated landscape amenities, as featured in this plan, serving as an aesthetic and functional improvement to the community. This is particular relevant to the retail oriented streets which serve the central business district and neighborhood commercial corridors.

**Goal 11:** To provide for the preservation of older residential neighborhoods through a systematic code enforcement program, a rehabilitation loan program and the use of Community

Development funds to provide the public improvements necessary to maintain neighborhood amenities.

**Policy Statement 11:** The City recognizes the aging character and resultant deteriorating condition of a small portion of its housing stock. The City actively encourages the revitalization of its housing through residents' participation in available rehabilitation programs such as the Clifton Home Improvement Program. In addition, the City should review the current property maintenance regulations to ensure they contain regulations that will result in the preservation of the existing housing stock.

**Goal 12:** To preserve the historic and cultural heritage of the City by determining whether pending development would adversely affect historic or cultural values.

**Policy Statement 12:** The City seeks to identify, maintain, and protect historically significant structures as identified in the Plan through the adoption of regulations that reaffirm the historic element that characterize the community.

**Goal 13:** To enhance community appearance and the visual environment by encouraging good design for new and rehabilitated buildings.

**Policy Statement 13:** The imposition of design standards can enhance and assure that sites are developed in an attractive manner consistent with sound planning design criteria. This can be best reinforced by appropriate controls regarding building placement, lighting, signage, landscaping, parking, circulation, architectural details, and related elements. It is the city's policy to review and upgrade the current standards, where appropriate, to ensure they serve to enhance the site plan review process in the city.

**Goal 14:** To provide for a limited population growth during the time span of the Master Plan. The key factors which should be considered in planning for new development are water supply, water quality, air quality, transportation, storm drainage facilities, open space and the availability of new public facilities, including public schools.

**Policy Statement 14:** The City seeks to encourage the continued development that maintains and incorporates strict environmental performance standards. The intent of the plan is to provide for controlled development and redevelopment that separate incompatible land uses, that can be accommodated while minimize adverse impacts on the community's facilities, ensure that infill development does not adversely impact the environmental character of the area, its physical features, or circulation, and does not add to the physical congestion of neighborhoods. The City's current standards should be reviewed and upgraded, where appropriate, to require provision of open space for all new development projects.

**Goal 15:** To provide for the best possible development of the few remaining vacant tracts, keeping in mind the objectives of maintaining a balance of land uses and diversified residential uses.

**Policy Statement 15:** The City of Clifton recognizes that the protection of existing residential neighborhoods, community appearance and visual environment while looking to provide the best use and development design of the remaining vacant lots is a priority. The Plan's land use recommendations are designed to protect and reinforce the prevailing residential development patterns in the community, maintain and enhance existing areas of

stability in the community, encourage the proper relationship between existing land uses by promoting a spatial distribution of uses and establishing areas which have their own integrity and uniformity of purpose.

**Goal 16:** To include in the review of development proposals and applications for re-zoning a study for the fiscal impact of such proposals on the City of Clifton; and to conduct a cost-revenue study which would analyze the revenue to be produced and the cost of municipal services.

**Policy Statement 16:** The City seeks to encourage development which is sensitive to the community's particular physical characteristics and will serve as an aesthetic and functional improvement to the community. The City recognizes that development pressure and infill development may result in increased demand on community facilities and services, traffic congestion, and other impacts on the community. It is the policy of this plan to enhance the protection of the community resources and maintain the community's quality of life. Within this framework, any new development and redevelopment projects in the City shall identify their fiscal and municipal services impact on the community.

**Goal 17:** To support the overall philosophy of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) as a means of providing growth management on a state-wide basis while retaining the principles of home-rule.

**Policy Statement 17:** The City maintains that the general intent of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, to manage growth within the framework of an assessment of needs and infrastructure capabilities, represents a reasonable approach to growth management. The City recognizes that the State Development and Redevelopment Plan's specific planning area designation for Clifton, PA-1, represents a reasonable approach to growth management.

**Goal 18:** To work with county and state agencies to encourage public transit to serve the needs of Clifton's residents and workers.

**Policy Statement 18:** The City recognizes the need to reinforce the availability, use, and efficiency of mass transit transportation in the community. The intent of the Plan is to work with local, regional and governmental agencies to promote a safe and efficient transit system; improve the safe and efficient movement of traffic through the community; enhance pedestrian safety; expand existing and establish additional park and ride facilities for rail stations, particularly at Delawanna and Athenia.

**Goal 19:** To provide a variety of recreational uses for all segments of the City's population.

**Policy Statement 19:** The City seeks to provide the continued improvement of the recreation infrastructure to accommodate local needs; maintain attractive and aesthetically pleasing public open spaces for active and passive recreation opportunities; and establish policies and pursue funding for the creation of new open space and recreation facilities in the community. This can be best reinforced by encouraging new development and redevelopment projects to incorporate an open space component, where appropriate; supplementing existing parks with additional equipment and facilities as needed; and exploring purchasing of vacant environmentally constrained properties for open space preservation off Valley Road.

**Goal 20:** To encourage active participation in the planning process by Clifton's citizens and conduct the City's planning program within the framework of a regional setting.

**Policy Statement 20:** The City of Clifton acknowledges that public participation by its citizens in the planning practice and public policy represents the basis for a comprehensive growth management sought for the community. This can be best reinforced by developing a land use policy providing for a balanced growth fully cognizant of the needs and rights of Clifton's neighboring communities and Passaic County. It is the objective of the municipality to encourage a regional planning framework to increase Clifton's residents participation and involvement in the planning practices that benefit and address the need of the community.

**Goal 21:** To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.

**Policy Statement 21:** The City of Clifton acknowledges that the recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste is necessary to conserve our natural resources and reduce the amount of solid waste disposed of in landfills. Through its recycling program newspapers, clear glass, brown and green glass, large non-metal items, large metal items and yard and tree refuse is removed from the general solid waste stream.

**Extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased.**

Municipal Land Use Law goals and policies were incorporated into the Land Use Plan Element as follows:

1. To encourage City actions to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in Clifton which will promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare.

**This remains a valid goal.**

2. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters.

**This remains a valid goal.**

3. To provide adequate light, air and open space.

**This remains a valid goal.**

4. To ensure that the development within the City does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, Passaic County and the state as a whole.

**This remains a valid goal.**

5. To promote the establishment of appropriate densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment.

**This remains a valid goal.**

6. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies.

**This remains a valid goal.**

15. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of uses and open space, both public and private, in a manner compatible with the character of the City and the environment.

**This remains a valid goal.**

16. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging the location of such facilities and routes which would result in congestion, blight or unsafe conditions.

**This remains a valid goal.**

17. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangements.

**This remains a valid goal.**

18. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources, and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land.

**This remains a valid goal.**

19. To encourage planned unit developments which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development of the particular site.

**This remains a valid goal.**

20. To encourage senior citizen housing construction;

**This remains a valid goal. The City, through two redevelopment plans has endorsed the construction of affordable senior citizen housing with 125 units already constructed on the Athenia Steel Co. site and 208 units approved as part of the Van Houten Avenue Redevelopment Plan.**

21. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land;

**This remains a valid goal.**

22. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to compliment municipal recycling programs.

**Goal 1:** To continue to encourage a balance of land uses with diversified residential areas, commercial areas to serve the residents of Clifton and nearby communities, and office and industrial areas to provide jobs and strengthen tax base.

**Policy Statement 1:** The City of Clifton recognizes that one of its most significant attributes is a balanced distribution of land uses. The Plan's land use recommendations are designed to protect and reinforce the prevailing residential development patterns in the community, and preclude any introduction of incompatible non-residential use in these neighborhoods or expansion of existing nonconforming uses. The recommendations are also designed to encourage commercial and industrial uses in established commercial areas through appropriate land use controls, and provide for infill development compatible to the uses and intensities to the levels, and locations of the established neighborhood.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 2:** To promote the continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the City's housing stock.

**Policy Statement 2:** The City recognizes the aging character and resultant deteriorating condition of a small portion of its housing stock. The City actively encourages the revitalization of its housing through the continue implementation of CDBG funds to upgrade and improve the housing stock available to low- and moderate-income City residents;

through the residents' participation in available rehabilitation programs such as the County Home Improvement Program; and through the implementation of a systematic code enforcement program to preserve the older residential neighborhoods. In addition, the city should review and upgrade the current property maintenance regulations, where appropriate, to ensure they contain regulations that will result in the preservation of the existing housing stock. In addition, the City recognizes that deteriorating housing exists in older neighborhoods, particularly Botany Village, and that redevelopment of these neighborhoods may be warranted.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 3:** To affirmatively address the community's low and moderate income housing obligation in the manner established by the City of Clifton Housing Plan.

**Policy Statement 3:** The New Jersey Council On Affordable Housing has established pre-credited housing need numbers for every municipality in the State. The City of Clifton has adopted a housing plan that addresses its housing needs, as adjusted by the COAH vacant land adjustment methodology. Consequently, the city land use policy is designed to complement the housing plan's recommendations and incorporate the sites designated in that plan.

**The City of Clifton, in 2005, adopted its Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan that proposes to meet its fair share obligation through a variety of measures, including rehabilitation of substandard units, creation of new units for both families and senior citizens and existing credits and adjustments as per COAH's regulations.**

**Goal 4:** To protect environmentally sensitive areas from development in excess of the carrying capacity of the land through steep slope ordinances or other restrictive ordinances as necessary. Purchase of environmentally sensitive lands and development for access and use as park and open space should be considered. Retain all remaining farms as open space.

**Policy Statement 4:** The City of Clifton seeks to limit development to that which is sensitive to the community's particular physical characteristics, and preserves the city's sensitive environmental features. In particular, the City seeks to limit development to that which preserves steeply sloped areas (defined to include any slope of minimally fifteen percent grade), discourage development in order to preserve and protect the natural features in the city and requires increase horizontal setbacks between adjacent property uses on steeper slopes. Such areas would include the Garrett Mountain area from the border with Paterson to the border with Montclair, existing wetland areas city-wide and the preservation of remaining farms as open space.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 5:** To promote scenic preservation for the Garrett Mountain area by restricting development from breaking the ridgeline, or otherwise degrading the scenic qualities of this natural resource.

**Policy Statement 5:** The City of Clifton acknowledges that Garrett Mountain represents a significant environmental area and one of the community's most significant attributes. To that extent, the city seeks to retain the area's environmental integrity and open space character, and ensure that any prospective development and/or redevelopment in the

vicinity of Garrett Mountain is responsive to its environmental sensitive features and can be accommodated within the community's. The city expressly seeks to discourage any additional development which adversely affects this natural resource and does not minimize any prospective intrusive aspects on the community's environmentally sensitive features. Strict enforcement of the steep slopes overlay provisions contained in the Clifton Zoning Ordinance is recommended.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 6:** To encourage the re-use, rehabilitation or reconstruction of older non-residential areas and existing commercial and industrial structures which have been vacated for potential re-use as appropriate non-residential uses in order to maintain a balance of land uses, existing jobs and to produce new jobs. Environmentally safe uses should be encouraged in such re-use, rehabilitation or reconstruction should be accomplished

**Policy Statement 6:** The City seeks to address the continuing loss of the manufacturing base by encouraging the adaptive reuse of older, obsolete industrial facilities. It is the policy of the city to promote the re-use of these facilities as non-residential uses in order to maintain the vitality of the employment base in the City and a balanced land use distribution; provide a comprehensive and coordinated plan to guide the redevelopment and necessary physical improvements; and plan for the redevelopment of vacant commercial and industrial structures as well as industrial complexes that are available to public and private redevelopment efforts. The city should actively promote the continued revitalization of existing commercial areas, identify potential parcels for redevelopment, and seek State and County funds earmarked for commercial revitalization.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 7:** To encourage the revitalization of the City's older business areas through proper land use controls; utilization of design elements; encourage provision and expansion of off-street parking; and provision of other public improvements.

**Policy Statement 7:** The City seeks to encourage the continued development of the community's business districts for retail and service commercial uses serving the daily needs of the residents. The City's policy is to define the commercial areas' functional role in the community and reaffirm their identity, uniformity of purpose, and integration of building, landscaping, signage, design and parking elements. Design criteria illumination, for signage, should include no back lighting.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 8:** To promote the revitalization and enhancement of the Main Avenue corridor as a unified, pedestrian-friendly downtown business district for the community.

**Policy Statement 8:** The City recognizes the corridor as the critical central business district in the community and seeks to revitalize and redevelop this area through the appropriate redevelopment mechanisms that are available to public and private redevelopment interests. The plan hereby incorporates any recommendation, policy, goal, design standards and bulk regulatory controls set forth by the Main Avenue Redevelopment Plan for "Section A" and "Section B". The City policy is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated long-range plan to guide the growth, development and physical improvements which are necessary to

ensure the continued vitality of this area, including specialized area and bulk regulatory controls, signage and lighting provisions, parking and landscape features.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 9:** To provide adequate community facilities to serve Clifton's residents in terms of schools, parks and playgrounds, libraries, senior citizens centers, fire houses and other municipal buildings. A principal goal of this plan is to provide and preserve the community services for Clifton's residents, businesses and industry in terms of police and fire protection, adequate sanitary and storm sewers, street cleaning, snow removal, garbage disposal, health services, recreational programs, day care centers and senior citizen services.

**Policy Statement 9:** The city seeks to provide the minimum level of infrastructure improvements to accommodate local needs, and discourage the imposition of new or expanded facilities that may be utilized to encourage or support higher levels of development than contemplated in this plan. A principal goal of this plan is to encourage infrastructure improvements that would enhance the city's community facilities and services provided without resulting in increased pressures for more development in the community. The city's land use policy is expressly designed to discourage infrastructure improvements that would result in increased development pressures on the City's environmental features and, specifically, in the Garrett Mountain area.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 10:** To provide for the maintenance and upgrading of the local street system to serve abutting areas.

**Policy Statement 10:** The city recognizes that a safe and efficient traffic circulation system through the community enhance pedestrian safety, and provide associated improved traffic signage and signalization, as necessary. It is the objective of the municipality to render traffic improvements along major roads that also incorporate associated landscape amenities, as featured in this plan, serving as an aesthetic and functional improvement to the community. This is particular relevant to the retail oriented streets which serve the central business district and neighborhood commercial corridors.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 11:** To provide for the preservation of older residential neighborhoods through a systematic code enforcement program, a rehabilitation loan program and the use of Community Development funds to provide the public improvements necessary to maintain neighborhood amenities.

**Policy Statement 11:** The City recognizes the aging character and resultant deteriorating condition of a small portion of its housing stock. The City actively encourages the revitalization of its housing through residents' participation in available rehabilitation programs such as the Clifton Home Improvement Program. In addition, the City should review the current property maintenance regulations to ensure they contain regulations that will result in the preservation of the existing housing stock.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 12:** To preserve the historic and cultural heritage of the City by determining whether pending development would adversely affect historic or cultural values.

**Policy Statement 12:** The City seeks to identify, maintain, and protect historically significant structures as identified in the Plan through the adoption of regulations that reaffirm the historic element that characterize the community.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 13:** To enhance community appearance and the visual environment by encouraging good design for new and rehabilitated buildings.

**Policy Statement 13:** The imposition of design standards can enhance and assure that sites are developed in an attractive manner consistent with sound planning design criteria. This can be best reinforced by appropriate controls regarding building placement, lighting, signage, landscaping, parking, circulation, architectural details, and related elements. It is the city's policy to review and upgrade the current standards, where appropriate, to ensure they serve to enhance the site plan review process in the city.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 14:** To provide for a limited population growth during the time span of the Master Plan. The key factors which should be considered in planning for new development are water supply, water quality, air quality, transportation, storm drainage facilities, open space and the availability of new public facilities, including public schools.

**Policy Statement 14:** The City seeks to encourage the continued development that maintains and incorporates strict environmental performance standards. The intent of the plan is to provide for controlled development and redevelopment that separate incompatible land uses, that can be accommodated while minimize adverse impacts on the community's facilities, ensure that infill development does not adversely impact the environmental character of the area, its physical features, or circulation, and does not add to the physical congestion of neighborhoods. The City's current standards should be reviewed and upgraded, where appropriate, to require provision of open space for all new development projects.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 15:** To provide for the best possible development of the few remaining vacant tracts, keeping in mind the objectives of maintaining a balance of land uses and diversified residential uses.

**Policy Statement 15:** The City of Clifton recognizes that the protection of existing residential neighborhoods, community appearance and visual environment while looking to provide the best use and development design of the remaining vacant lots is a priority. The Plan's land use recommendations are designed to protect and reinforce the prevailing residential development patterns in the community, maintain and enhance existing areas of stability in the community, encourage the proper relationship between existing land uses by promoting a spatial distribution of uses and establishing areas which have their own integrity and uniformity of purpose.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 16:** To include in the review of development proposals and applications for re-zoning a study for the fiscal impact of such proposals on the City of Clifton; and to conduct a cost-revenue study which would analyze the revenue to be produced and the cost of municipal services.

**Policy Statement 16:** The City seeks to encourage development which is sensitive to the community's particular physical characteristics and will serve as an aesthetic and functional improvement to the community. The City recognizes that development pressure and infill development may result in increased demand on community facilities and services, traffic congestion, and other impacts on the community. It is the policy of this plan to enhance the protection of the community resources and maintain the community's quality of life. Within this framework, any new development and redevelopment projects in the City shall identify their fiscal and municipal services impact on the community.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 17:** To support the overall philosophy of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) as a means of providing growth management on a state-wide basis while retaining the principles of home-rule.

**Policy Statement 17:** The City maintains that the general intent of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, to manage growth within the framework of an assessment of needs and infrastructure capabilities, represents a reasonable approach to growth management. The City recognizes that the State Development and Redevelopment Plan's specific planning area designation for Clifton, PA-1, represents a reasonable approach to growth management.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 18:** To work with county and state agencies to encourage public transit to serve the needs of Clifton's residents and workers.

**Policy Statement 18:** The City recognizes the need to reinforce the availability, use, and efficiency of mass transit transportation in the community. The intent of the Plan is to work with local, regional and governmental agencies to promote a safe and efficient transit system; improve the safe and efficient movement of traffic through the community; enhance pedestrian safety; expand existing and establish additional park and ride facilities for rail stations, particularly at Delawanna and Athenia.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 19:** To provide a variety of recreational uses for all segments of the City's population.

**Policy Statement 19:** The City seeks to provide the continued improvement of the recreation infrastructure to accommodate local needs; maintain attractive and aesthetically pleasing public open spaces for active and passive recreation opportunities; and establish policies and pursue funding for the creation of new open space and recreation facilities in the community. This can be best reinforced by encouraging new development and redevelopment projects to incorporate an open space component, where appropriate;

supplementing existing parks with additional equipment and facilities as needed; and exploring purchasing of vacant environmentally constrained properties for open space preservation off Valley Road.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 20:** To encourage active participation in the planning process by Clifton's citizens and conduct the City's planning program within the framework of a regional setting.

**Policy Statement 20:** The City of Clifton acknowledges that public participation by its citizens in the planning practice and public policy represents the basis for a comprehensive growth management sought for the community. This can be best reinforced by developing a land use policy providing for a balanced growth fully cognizant of the needs and rights of Clifton's neighboring communities and Passaic County. It is the objective of the municipality to encourage a regional planning framework to increase Clifton's residents participation and involvement in the planning practices that benefit and address the need of the community.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Goal 21:** To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.

**Policy Statement 21:** The City of Clifton acknowledges that the recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste is necessary to conserve our natural resources and reduce the amount of solid waste disposed of in landfills. Through its recycling program newspapers, clear glass, brown and green glass, large non-metal items, large metal items and yard and tree refuse is removed from the general solid waste stream.

**This remains a valid goal.**

**Extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last reviewed with particular regard to density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection and disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials; and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.**

Within the last few years, several changes in assumptions, policies and objectives have taken place at the State and local level. This has caused the Planning Board to continue the Master Plan Reexamination process. The specific changes are noted below:

- The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) has been undergoing its mandated Reexamination. This process has recently been completed and Cross Acceptance is nearing completion. (Insert SDRP goals and objectives that are relevant to Clifton.)

The Metropolitan Planning Area (PA-1) encompasses both large urban centers and developed suburban areas. These areas are generally fully developed with significant investment in existing infrastructure systems. There is little vacant land available for development and, as such, much of the development activity is infill development or redevelopment. The State Development and Redevelopment Plan states that public and private investment in PA-1 should be the "principle priority" of state, regional and local planning agencies, with the intent being to direct development and redevelopment into these portions of the State. Within this framework, the recommended policy objectives for PA-1 are summarized to include the following:

- Land Use: Guide new development and redevelopment in PA-1 in a manner which ensures an efficient use of remaining vacant parcels and existing infrastructure.
- Housing: Preserve the existing housing stock through a program of maintenance and rehabilitation. Provide a variety of housing choices through new development and redevelopment.
- Economic Development: Promote economic development by encouraging redevelopment, infill development, public-private partnerships, and infrastructure improvements.
- Transportation: Encourage the use of public transit and alternative modes of transportation.
- Natural Resource Conservation: Reclaim environmentally damaged sites and mitigate impacts on remaining environmental and natural resources, including wildlife habitats. Special emphasis should be on air quality, preservation of historic sites, the provision of open space and recreation.
- Recreation: Maintain existing parks and open space and expand the system through redevelopment and additional land dedications.

- Historic Preservation: Integrate and reconcile historic preservation with new development and redevelopment efforts.
- Public Facilities and Open Space: Complete, repair or replace existing infrastructure systems to enable future development and redevelopment.
- Intergovernmental Coordination: Provide for regionalization and intergovernmental coordination of land use and development policies.

The city has evolved a strategy of using infill development and redevelopment to promote the “Smart Growth” policies enumerated in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Infill development of vacant and underutilized properties has resulted in the construction approval of over 1,000 dwelling units. In addition, new commercial facilities, including Botany Plaza Shopping Center, Clifton Commons Shopping Center and several professional offices as well as renovations and expansion to the Styertowne Shopping Center, including the development of a new Acme food store, have occurred. The Stop and Shop Shopping Center, at Broad Street and Alwood Road has been redeveloped with a state of the art food store and associated satellite stores. Additional related projects, including measures to upgrade the Athenia neighborhood and the Van Houten business district, as well as the potential redevelopment in the Botany Village neighborhood are being planned in the near future.

**Consistent with the SDRP and the 2003 Land Use Plan Element, the City has adopted the following plan and zone:**

- In 2005, the City submitted its Housing Element and Fair Share Plan to the Council on Affordable Housing seeking substantive certification. The Plan provides the mechanism for the City to meet its fair share obligation.
- 2004 the PD-HC zone was created along the route 3 corridor from Passaic Avenue to the Railroad tracks from Allwood Road to State Highway Route 3.
- **March of 2006 adopted new storm water management rules that were recently adopted by the DEP.**
- **The Planning Board, over the past few years, has identified many areas in the Zoning Ordinance that it has recommended for review and enhancement. Specifically, the Board has provided, through discussion, guidance and input into proposed changes regarding the following: permitted lot disturbance area, environmental impact statement requirements, shade tree requirements, etc.**

**The Specific Changes Recommended for the Master Plan or Development Regulations, if any, including Underlying Objectives, Policies and Standards or whether New Plan or Regulations should be prepared.**

Locate new medium density senior citizen residential zoning near commercial centers such as Clifton Avenue, Main Avenue and Botany Village to promote nearby retail, office and related uses.

Encourage pedestrian friendly accessibility near major highways and mass transit facilities.

Permit mixed office uses along Route 3 from Bloomfield Avenue to Passaic Avenue.

Permit mixed office and commercial uses at the Corrados/Bright Star properties.

Incorporate the new Redevelopment Areas (Athenia Steel/Main Avenue A & B/Hoffman LaRoche) into the City Zoning Ordinance.

Redefine a new Central Business District Zone for the Main Avenue Overlay to be consistent with the present underlying zone, the overlay zone and the approved redevelopment areas A and B.

Target Botany Village for potential redevelopment area for new commercial and residential development potential.

Recognizing the need for more localized separation and open space between residences, the existing Bulk and Area Schedule of the city should be revised as shown in the table below:

District	Permitted Uses	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Permitted Max. Lot Coverage	Proposed Max. Lot Coverage
R-A1	One Family	9,375	30%	27%
R-A2	One Family	6,600	30%	27%
R-A3	One Family	5,000	27%	25%
R-B1	One Family	5,000	27%	25%
R-B1	Two Family	7,500	25%	22%
R-B2	Garden Apts.	60,000	25% main bldg.	No change
R-B2	Townhouse	60,000	25% main bldg.	20%
R-B3	Multi-Fam. Apts.	10,000	25%	No change
R-HR	High Rise Apts.	4 acres	15% main bldg.	No change

Further, improvements to the visual separation between residences is the proposed new definition for building height. The recommends that the definition of building height be revised as follows: "The vertical distance from the average finished grade to the top of the highest roof beams on a flat or shed roof, to the deck level on a mansard roof and the ridge level for a gable, hip and gambled roofs."

Preserve the existing farmlands through their rezoning to agricultural land use that permits farming, green houses, nurseries, retail businesses associated with permitted farm uses and large lot single family residential development (proposed R District). Further, it is the City's intention to make its farmlands an open space priority in accordance with the Passaic County Open Space and Recreation Master Plan. Rezoning options, as noted above and the use of the Passaic County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund for land acquisition are two

of the tools contemplated to ensure the retention and preservation of the City's remaining farmlands.

Create a new public park zone in which all existing public parks and conservation lands will be located.

Create a new ordinance that regulates newsracks by requiring the use of only modular newsrack box assemblies (MNBA), where more than one newsrack box is situated. This will help eliminate the haphazard and poorly maintained newsracks located throughout the City.

Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, specifically wetlands, through restrictive zoning, and/or the purchase of such lands for open space preservation.

Within the adopted redevelopment plan areas, planned development zones, and all other zone districts, that have not received approval or been constructed, look to reduce the overall residential density to 8 units per acre and require a minimum of 25% open space to include both active and passive recreational components to the plans.

The Aquackonack Gardens neighborhood, located north of Van Houten Avenue and east of Valley Road, is an old established neighborhood with narrow winding roads without sidewalks. This old Defense worker neighborhood has deep history within the City. Preservation of its road system and existing development pattern, including the pattern of lots, maintains the integrity of this neighborhood. Revisions to the City Zoning Ordinance should provide regulations and incentives to encourage the existing neighborhood remain intact. In addition, it is recommended that the City explore the option of designating this unique neighborhood as a Historic District. Such designation would allow the City to strictly manage renovations/rehabilitation of homes, changes to existing open spaces and circulation patterns, as well as complete redevelopment of individual lots or groups of lots.

Encourage a revision to the zoning code of the City of Clifton to enact a change to allow building line extensions for non-conforming setbacks in residential zones only. This will help eliminate applications that appear before the Zoning Board of Adjustment therefore providing efficient and timely enhancements to our housing stock.

Explore the feasibility of establishing an Architectural Review Committee for the City with a focus on Botany Village and Aquackonack Gardens.

Institute a site plan requirement for all single family new and existing dwelling construction projects. This will include minor subdivisions and additions to existing dwelling units. This will help establish storm water and grading issues are formally addressed during the approval process. This may be included in a new and separate checklist for residential development of this type as not to be a burden to the applicant.

A Circulation Plan Element should be prepared for the City showing the location and types of a facilities for all modes of transportation required for the efficient movement of people and goods into, about and through Clifton, taking into account the functional highway classification of the Federal Highway Administration and the type, locations, conditions and availability of existing and proposed transportation facilities, including air, water, road and rail.

Explore the feasibility of participating in the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection Act utilizing the Transfer of Development Rights program offered through the New Jersey Highlands Council

and the associated legislation. Utilizing the transfer of development rights grant program, the City must create the necessary elements such as a build out plan, Real Estate Market analysis, wastewater and water capacity, and identify potential receiving areas only if the feasibility plans identify more capacity for Highlands transfer of development rights units.

Reduce the overall congestion on the main arterial and major collector roads in and around our major highways. This will include most county roads within and around the city. Take an active approach to development in other communities adjacent to our City of Clifton and suggest alternatives to reducing traffic and congestion on roads that are at a level of Service "C" or worse. This will include a review of all parking regulations for all uses within the City of Clifton.

Review Industrial areas that have changed use over the years to non-industrial uses for a zone change to better fit the uses that exist. This review shall include a review of industrial areas for uses that are compatible with the adjacent zones and consider rezoning to accomplish better suited uses for those areas. This shall include the uses as stated in our ordinance being updated to a more current uses typically found in a modern industrial zone.

Review Current industrial zones permitted uses and update those uses to be consistent with current manufacturing standards and products. Also review areas and uses that accessory uses can be added with no impact that conform to today's commercial and industrial trends

Review large lot areas within the residential zones located throughout the city to protect the character of the neighborhood, scenic value of those areas and prepare guidelines for a new large lot zone that will protect those areas from additional development. Specifically, the existing RA-1 District, generally located along the east and west sides of Grove Street from Van Houten Avenue and East Gate, should be rezoned to encourage the retention of these established residences on large lots. See the Appendix A for the specific location/lots associated with the proposed Grove Street R District and the corresponding bulk and area requirements.

Encourage the institution of an open space tax at \$0.75 per 1000 dollars of assessed value to assist the city in preserving open space and rehabilitating the cities recreation facilities for the city's residents.

Encourage mixed-use projects to efficiently utilize land within the City in order to provide for a new urbanism approach to development within the City. This will lead to the utilization of mass-transit facilities and be more environmentally friendly development patterns.

Encourage a requirement for development of an environmental impact study be added to the City of Clifton development checklist to encourage environmentally friendly development and utilize the environmental committee during those processes.

Encourage the location of public/private schools and Board of Education buildings and facilities within compatible zones not in industrial zones where there may be conflicts with the health, safety and welfare of those occupants of the public facility. A Planning Board sub-committee should be established to review the City's Zoning Ordinance with a focus on establishing the appropriate zones, within the City, that can adequately and suitably accommodate future school construction. As part of the committee's review, specific development/design conditions should be incorporated into those zones that permit school construction in order to ensure the proper development of any school. Retaining the public/private schools and the Board of Education as

permitted “conditional uses” affords the City greater control of their location, even in zones that have been established as appropriate for such uses.

Encourage the creation of an ordinance that would limit the hours of operation for businesses in the City of Clifton. This limitation would increase the quality of life in and around the business area where residential uses and zones exist. Limiting the hours of operation would help ensure that residents and businesses could co-exist without creating unpleasant relationships between property owners.

Review the required buffer between industrial uses and residential uses and districts. Currently the buffer is 40 feet. This requirement has been used for residential districts and a review should take place to increase that to all residential uses and/or districts that border industrial uses and districts.

Encourage Montclair University to limit the Quinn Road access to the college as an entrance only. This would ensure that the safety of the residents, students and pedestrians are not subject to a hazardous road intersection if the Quinn Road access becomes two-way. Currently Valley Road is at near capacity for traffic and the steep grade of Quinn Road causes it to be closed during bad weather. For this reason Quinn Road should never become a two-way access from Valley Road. The University should look at the alternative ways out of the university without adversely impacting the surrounding Municipalities. The University should consider the Clove Road overpass as proposed by the NJDOT as the solution to the traffic issues that plague the college. The university should also consider the changing of the class schedules to lessen the impact the traffic that the university generates on the surrounding Municipalities and surrounding streets. The university should also consider that it may be at capacity as a college in terms of land use and the strategy should be to look for satellite campuses to reduce the impact of the one central school.

Review areas within the Main Street corridor for additional parking opportunities. Parking on Main Street has become an issue and the businesses that rely on pedestrian and vehicular traffic need additional parking for customers and business associates. The City of Clifton should consider creating a parking program that will add a certain amount of parking per year to the main street corridor. Coordination with local business groups to provide timely information regarding properties suitable for parking is to be encouraged.

Review the landscape requirement of our ordinance to encourage the caliper and size to be of a quality that would ensure the proper growth and screening that the landscape would create. For this requirement the base caliper for trees included in the landscape ordinance shall be 4 ½” to 5 ½” caliper.

**The Recommendation of the Planning Board concerning the Incorporation of Redevelopment Plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law,” P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C. 40A:12A-1 et al.) into the Land Use Plan Element of the Municipal Master Plan and Recommended Changes, if any, in the Local Development Regulations necessary to effectuate the Redevelopment Plans of the Municipality.**

To date, a total of five different redevelopment areas have been identified by the Planning Board as areas in need of redevelopment and have been endorsed by the City Council as areas in need of redevelopment. The Planning Board has prepared and adopted the required individual Redevelopment Plans that establishes the necessary zoning regulations for the redevelopment of each identified area. The Council has endorsed these plans by adopting the individual Redevelopment Plans. The Redevelopment Plans that have been approved by the City are as follows:

**Hoffman LaRoche**

These areas include the Hoffman LaRoche property (Block 79.04 Lots 10&21 and Block 80.02 Lots 1&4); the Main Avenue Section A (Block 12.12 Lots 1 to 4 and 23 to 25); the Main Avenue Section B (Block 8.04, Lots 12-14); and the former Athenia Steel property (Block 29.02 Lots 1, 10 and 20). The plan proposes to maintain the M-3 designation and be redeveloped as needed in accordance with the development regulations of this zone.

**Main Avenue “A”**

This overall redevelopment area consists of seven contiguous properties which were formerly located in the B-C General Business zone district and the Main Avenue Overlay Zone District. The redevelopment plan creates two new districts with complementary sets of permitted uses and development regulations. The B-CA zone permitted a variety of retail and restaurant uses while the B-CB zone permits a U.S. Post Office facility. This is intended to provide pedestrian-friendly retail and dining area along Main Avenue.

**Main Avenue “B”**

The redevelopment plan calls for the creation of a new district for the property with a new set of permitted uses and development regulations. The new district is the B-CRB zone district (Commercial Redevelopment B) in which neighborhood commercial activities are permitted. A main objective of this new zone is to create a pedestrian-friendly environment in which development is oriented towards the street and outdoor dining is encouraged.

**Athenia Steel**

This plan identified three vacant, contiguous parcels, which had been the site of the former Athenia Steel Company. The property was formerly located in the M-2 General Industrial zone district and the PDO-1 Planned Development Option No.1 Overlay. The new PSRC district permits affordable senior citizen housing and municipal recreation facilities.

**Howe Richardson Scales**

This plan identified two industrial properties which had been the site of the Howe Richardson Scales company. These lots were formerly located within the M2 Industrial Zone. The new district will be known as Howe Richardson Track Redevelopment Area and be designated as the ASCH-Affordable Senior Citizen Housing Redevelopment Zone District. The new district permits affordable senior low and moderate income rentals.

## APPENDIX A

### **R DISTRICT REZONING RECOMMENDATIONS**

As shown on the attached Tax Map, the proposed area for the new R District consists of the following lots:

- Block 39.04, Lots 7-18.
- Block 45.01, Lots 5, 8, 10, 12.
- Block 39.05, Lot 50.
- Block 45.02, Lots 75, 77, 78. 80-84.
- Block 77.01, Lot 1

### **Schedule of Regulations as to Bulk, Height and Other Requirements R District**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Permitted/Required</b>
Permitted Uses	One-Family
Min. Lot Area/Dwelling Unit	20,000 sq. ft.
Minimum Lot Area	20,000 sq. ft.
Minimum Lot Width	75 ft.
Minimum Lot Depth	275 ft.
Minimum Front Yard Setback	50 ft.
Minimum Side Yard Setback	
Each	15 ft.
Both	30 ft.
Street Side	30 ft.
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	50 ft.
Maximum Lot Coverage	25%
Maximum Building Height (stories/feet)	2 ½ /35 ft.